

Among the principal findings and conclusions:

1. It is possible to predict probable future use of groups of books with defined characteristics in a typical research library situation, although the qualifications are often complex and critical and confidence limits different from one subject to another.

2. Compact storage of books can save significant operating and capital sums, possibly ranging from 60 to 77 per cent of the costs of conventional housing.

3. The wisdom of accepting the economic advantages of compact storage must be weighed by qualitative judgment against the scholarly benefits of more accessible storage.

4. Past use of a title, if examined over a sufficiently long period, is an excellent and by far the best predictor of future use.

5. If 25 per cent of the economics collection of the University of Chicago were sent to storage, using a rule of language and publication date, the stored volumes would generate an estimated 3 per cent of total use; and each title would have a probability of being used roughly once in thirty-five years.

6. For humanistic disciplines, however, functions which do not employ past use are less successful. In Teutonic literature, for example, the 25 per cent of the collection selected by accession date and language would generate 12 per cent of the total use, and the average title would be used once in every ten years.

7. Employing "past use" over twenty years or more, some twenty-five per cent of the University of Chicago's collections of monographs in economics and Teutonic languages and literature could be stored with the expectation that only 1 per cent of the total use of the collections would come from the stored books. Predicted use of the average monograph thus selected: about once in one hundred years.

Some will say that the findings serve principally to confirm what is already known, namely, that books are subject to obsolescence as measured by intensity of use, and that large quantities of material in research

libraries enjoy relatively little use. Nevertheless, research libraries are under pressure because of costs, not only for storage but for acquisition and cataloging as well. The carefully marshalled evidence in this study and the restraint of interpretation and conclusion offer much, not only in support of lower cost of housing by compact storage of little-used material, but also in support of going further toward cooperative storage and the reduction of the number of copies of little-used books held by research libraries as a group.—*Richard H. Logsdon, Columbia University Libraries.*

Library Arts

Training Laymen in the Use of the Library.

By George S. Bonn. *Bibliographies, Abstracts, and Indexes.* By Margaret S. Bryant. (The State of the Library Art, Vol. 2, Parts 1-2) New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers, The State University Press, 1960. 114, 108p. \$5.00.

In the preface to this volume of an attractive and useful series, Ralph R. Shaw outlines the procedures followed by each of its compilers. He tells us that each one "attempts to summarize what the literature says with a minimum of redundancy but without editorial comment." Mr. Bonn, in stating his objectives, proposes not only to summarize the literature, but to indicate trends, problems, and needed research as well. In the introduction he has permitted himself the luxury of some comments which might well have been reserved for the concluding section, as, for example, "so far no one has shown or proved that training in the use of libraries really makes any appreciable difference to anybody anyhow." Approached from this skeptical point of view, the task of summarizing the literature on this topic must have proved tedious indeed.

The bibliography is doubtless the most useful feature of the work. It brings together an impressive array of over four hundred references to the subject, drawn from the professional literature of Europe and the United States. Mr. Bonn comments on these items in six sections dealing with various educational levels, while in the seventh

he evaluates the material on testing. There is much which is useful here, but the text is so loosely jointed and lacking in cohesion that the reading of it is rather difficult. It may well be that the fault lies in the nature of the materials rather than in any shortcomings of the compiler. Perhaps the subject might have been more effectively and usefully presented as a fully annotated bibliography arranged under quite specific subject headings. This arrangement would have made it possible to get at materials which cut across educational levels, such as instruction in the card catalog and in periodicals indexes.

The concluding section of this book outlines rather neatly some fruitful topics for research and investigation; however, its value is somewhat diminished by its subjectivity and the general air of futility which permeates it. One takes the publisher, rather than the compiler, to task for the appalling deficiencies of the index. It was surely prepared by someone lacking in knowledge of the basic principles of indexing or subject heading. The subjects "Catalog," "Periodicals—Indexes," and "Audio-visual materials" cannot be found, but one can find such entries as "Place of a college library in students' education," and "Need for continuous change in school library service."

Mrs. Bryant, who deals with several broad topics on which there is a copious amount of literature, places realistic limitations on the material which she summarizes. Bibliography, herein, does not include the description of books. Discussion of the field of indexes relates to "printed indexes in book form to literature from a variety of sources, and printed indexes to collections of abstracts or title listings." A further limitation

concerns the topic of information retrieval by mechanical means. The compiler reminds us of the close ties between indexing and cataloging, and indicates her intent to eschew all materials on the latter which are not pertinent to indexing. Her bibliography is, therefore, selective, comprising 162 items.

Despite the tri-partite title, the summary deals with the material as one topic. Section 1, labeled "Compilation and arrangement," identifies the major problems in this area, including national and international bibliographic organization, comprehensive coverage vs. selectivity, use made of bibliographies, and problems of similar magnitude. Under the heading "Evaluation," Mrs. Bryant competently discusses the literature which proposes solutions to some of these problems. Her concluding section, "Targets for research," is a masterful summary of the studies which ought to be undertaken in this highly significant field. She classifies the needs of the field, "in descending order of importance: research to determine objectives, the establishment of basic cost data, and research in techniques."

The index to this work reveals the same flaws described above.

A word concerning format is indicated. Presumably this series was designed to be useful to libraries and library schools for many years to come, yet the format exemplifies neither beauty nor durability. There is increasing evidence that the use of cold-type composition does not need to entail any sacrifice of good looks. It should be possible for the publisher to give us a series at a reasonable price which more nearly conforms to the librarian's standards of good book-making.—*Dorothy Ethlyn Cole*, State University of New York, Albany.

"The Future of Library Service. . ."

The July and October 1961 issues of *Library Trends* will be combined and issued in book form in February 1962. Price will be \$3.00. Frank L. Schick discusses these two issues in "The Future of Library Service and Education for Librarianship" in this issue of *CRL*, pp. 16-17.